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ABSTRACT

Seventh grade students studied the Victorian period using a 4-6 week interdisciplinary unit that integrated language arts, mathematics, art, science, social studies, music, home economics, parents, and business into the program. The main goals were to help students understand the importance of all curriculum subjects; comprehend how subjects are related; develop cooperative learning skills; and gain knowledge about the Victorian period. The overall cost for the program ranged between $300-500 dollars. The project developed different learning styles and a multisensory approach to learning. (JAG)

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VICTORIAN ERA
An Interdisciplinary Unit

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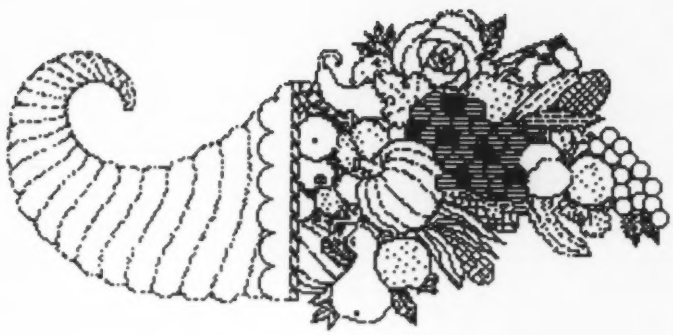

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VICTORIAN ERA

Seventh-grade students studied the Victorian period through the use of a major interdisciplinary unit which involved all disciplines.

PARTICIPANTS

An important element in the success of this unit was the integration of language arts, math, science, social studies, industrial arts, music, home economics, special eduction, parents and business. In addition to full participation from the seventh grade team, staff members from special education, music, shop, home economics, aids, and the cafeteria staff participated in this project.

While this interdisciplinary unit was designed for middle school students, it could be adapted and used with high school students as well.

WHO MIGHT CONSIDER ADAPTING THIS PROGRAM?

Schools that have heterogeneous grouping would find this type of activity effective since it accesses different learning styles.
The project helped to stimulate learning in students who otherwise might not be interested. The multisensory approach to learning produced a change in attitude for many students.

GOALS

To help students understand the importance of each subject in their lives

To understand how these subjects are related

To develop cooperative learning skills

To gain an awareness of the Victorian period

OUTCOMES

Students worked individually on class activities and research projects, and they also worked collectively toward the culminating event. In language arts, literature of the period was read, and research papers were completed on various authors; in social studies, questions were researched and written for the Jeopardy game; in science and math, the architecture of the period was studied, and students built a replica of a drawn-to-scale Victorian village. Due to a wide range of learning activities, each student was able to select a project that appealed to him or her directly.

PROCEDURES AND INSTRUCTIONS

We needed full cooperation from the entire seventh grade team and supplemental staff. Use of the library, shop, home economics, children's theater for costumes, band uniforms, food, including roast duck and chestnuts.

TIME

We met as a team 2 - 3 times a week for two months and continuously planned and revised. Meanwhile, our students worked in the various classroom for a period of 4 - 6 weeks.

MATERIALS AND COSTS

The estimated cost is between $300 - $500 for the purchase of food and materials, such as building materials for the Jeopardy Game, decorative material for crafts, and ingredients for the Victorian feast, including roast duck and chestnuts. We borrowed costumes from the children's theatre and band uniforms from the high school.

OVERALL VALUE

We felt that the unit was an opportunity to show students how these different subjects are all related and how school is connected to their lives. The project allowed for different learning styles and offered a multisensory approach to learning.